

2012 0628 Minutes Wilton Water Commission

June 28, 2012 Meeting at Wilton Town Hall

Commissioners present: Chairman Robert Duquette, Jim Tuttle, Tom Schultz; Sewer Commissioner John Jowders (arrived at 8:00 PM); Mike Bergeron (Superintendent?); Clerk Joanna K Eckstrom

Mr. Duquette called the Water Commission meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Agenda

Review Bills and Approve for Payment –

Mr. Tuttle asked commission received bill from Roger (Tremblay) from April work. Mr. Duquette said this was for conversion of water data to town database - there should be no issues going forward with June bill and beyond.

Other bill was for Quinn project. Mike's time (31 hours) is accounted for water & sewer inspections, etc. Mike notes that all main line work on this project is completed. Mr. Tuttle noted that rate should be \$40 per hour, not \$36 as stated on Mike's time sheet. All commissioners agreed that rate should be \$40 – time sheet / bill to be adjusted. Water portion was signed by commissioners; sewer portion would be done later.

Minutes – April 26, 2012 – lines 154 and 189 spelling correction **Roedel**; lines 477 through 488 spelling correction **Yonika**. Line 503 change \$65,000 per year to **\$52,000** per year. Motion by Mr. Schultz, second by Mr. Tuttle to accept minutes of April 26th as corrected. Unanimous.

May 31, 2012 – Mr. Schultz wished to go on record of having an issue with publishing (draft) minutes that have not been approved and questioned time limit for posting.

Misters Duquette and Tuttle said that draft minutes have been posted as draft minutes on the website and in the notebooks and that any minutes do not become official until they have been approved at the subsequent meeting in which line by line corrections may be made. Timely posting (Right to Know law) is within 72 business hours. Ms. Eckstrom said that any time she has posted minutes, the pages (website and hard copy) have a DRAFT watermark).

Mr. Tuttle noted that page 5, lines 140 through 143 should be corrected as follows:

Previous clerk had been hired at \$20 **change to \$15** an hour but that it was increased to \$25 **change to \$20**; and that pay would same, \$25 **change to \$20** per hour. Motion by Mr. Tuttle, second by Mr. Schultz to approve minutes as corrected. Unanimous.

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32 **Discuss Clerk Appointment** – Mr. Tuttle moved, Mr. Schultz second to defer
33 discussion to end of the meeting when Sewer Commissioner Jowders would be present.
34 All agreed.

35 **Discuss Arthur and Virginia Iannacci water hook up at 171 Abbot Hill Rd.** The
36 Iannacci's were not present this evening as they, Wetherbee Plumbing and Water
37 department not ready to move forward. There is a question of whether the Iannaccis
38 want to go forward with project because of its expense. Mike Bergeron has been to site
39 and thinks that 400' of pipe will do the job; suggests using 4" vs. 2" pipe as cost factors
40 are the same and end result would be greater capacity. There was extensive
41 discussion between commissioners and Mr. Bergeron about details of the actual
42 installation. Commissioners will consider the hook up again when they hear from the
43 Iannaccis that they are ready to go forward.

44 **Fire Chief Ray Dick** - Chief did not attend. Commissioners said that the Fire
45 Department had an issue (now resolved) with a bill. Mr. Schultz asked what happened
46 that municipal services were being billed for water. Mr. Tuttle said nothing has
47 changed; fire department, police department, library, etc. have always been issued a bill
48 for water and sewer. Problem with fire department was the multiplier from the meter
49 reader on the 2011 bills. The incorrect multiplier resulted in bills being 10 times more
50 than what they should be. This has been corrected.

51 The Fire Department washes its personal vehicles, fills fire tanks, and other water
52 department sources, including the hydrants which are billed at \$55 (quarterly). Mr.
53 Schultz said he thought it unfair that Fire Department hosts fundraisers (car washes) for
54 non-profit groups and then gets billed for water. Mr. Duquette thought that the Fire
55 department would like a concession for allowing car washes. It was suggested that the
56 meter be read before and after a car wash so that this usage could be deducted. Mr.
57 Schultz thought this appropriate especially when organizations like Eagle Scouts where
58 his son is a member. Consensus was that Water Department can help in this end by
59 adjusting bill. Chief will be invited to reschedule this meeting.

60 **Discuss combined bill procedure and notices as of 1/1/2013 ...** Mr. Duquette spoke
61 with Jaffrey about their water and sewer combined bill. Jaffrey bills monthly; allow a
62 customer to go three months then there's a shut-off if (entire) bill is unpaid. Customer

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63 doesn't have a choice as to how payment is applied; entire bill must be paid or shut-off
64 will be done. Jaffrey has shut-off, reconnect fee; uses lien process (for unpaid sewer).
65 Wilton bills quarterly with payment due within 30 days of billing; shut-off at 45 days from
66 billing if not paid. Customers respected 'hot pink' insert. Mr. Duquette said with April
67 billing, there were 4 shut-offs including 2 on bank-owned property. One property
68 remains shut-off (work being done, property unoccupied). He fielded seven calls, one of
69 which requested a 5 to 7 day delay in shut-off due to time when Social Security would
70 arrive. That customer followed thru and paid bill.

71 Mr. Bergeron said he had only one 'issue' but the woman went right down to pay bill.
72 Mr. Schultz reminded Mr. Bergeron about his personal safety and cited an incident
73 where his father was assaulted by an upset customer. Mr. Bergeron was advised that
74 he should walk away from potential confrontation.

75 Mr. Schultz asked if Water commission is in favor of having combined bill especially
76 since Wilton's water and sewer departments are distinct, separate entities. Mr. Tuttle -
77 yes. Current bills are combined. Mr. Duquette noted that while water is paid, there's
78 still customers whose sewer bills aren't paid (and subject to lien).

79 Mr. Tuttle shared his draft of insert that explains collection, shut-off for use after
80 1/1/2013. Top portion discusses water policy; bottom has sewer policy.

81 Commissioners asked when lien is placed and how much time passes to pay before a
82 tax deed. Tuttle and Duquette thought three years. Tuttle said because customers
83 make partial payments on water, sewer could never catch up (unpaid bills go to lien).

84 Mr. Duquette is speaking with Milford's David Boucher about helping them out with
85 Milford's sewer collections by shut-off customers who get water from Wilton (Pine
86 Valley) Milford legal department is reviewing and will draw up appropriate agreement.

87 Mr. Tuttle state that draft contemplates that any outstanding balances (water or sewer
88 combined bill) will lead to shut-off and/or liening of property. Duquette said he will write
89 up (for policies and procedures) to work in conjunction with Milford. (Duquette expects
90 that Wilton will charge Milford \$40 for every shut-off; Milford will pass bill to customer.

91 Mr. Schultz had question about Mr. Bergeron's authority to go into Milford and turn a
92 customer's water off. Consensus that Mr. Bergeron has authority to go on any property
93 served by Wilton Water (or Sewer) commissions.

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94 **Discuss Billing Quinn project for hook up fees.** Since a realtor is now involved, it's
95 time to think about hook ups and billing. Bill for \$1200 water, \$800 sewer per hook up
96 times sixteen lots. Question of billing up front or as each is done. Duquette understood
97 from meeting with the Quinns that once everything is done on their side, that Wilton
98 would submit its bills. Tuttle says it should be clarified that responsibility and time
99 frames are outlined in each deed. Everything behind shut-off belongs to homeowner
100 and it's their responsibility, including septic, pump station, etc. Water department owns
101 what in ground from property line out (to water line).

102 **Discuss implementation of Radio read R 900 Meters ...** per Mr. Bergeron, it's taking
103 4 – 5 days to read meters with current units. There are some locations that are difficult
104 to get to including Rebecca's Way and 'the pit' at Pine Valley mill. New readers cost
105 about \$300 each and would allow reading remotely (operator / reader can stay in
106 vehicle). (Mr. Schultz reminded Mr. Bergeron about safety issues both inside and
107 outside of his vehicle when reading meters.)

108 There needs to be a discussion of when to start with e-readers, cost to install, etc. and
109 how to pay for it before moving forward. Mr. Bergeron said he needs two devices – one
110 to read and a second to convert.

111 Commissioners reviewed a quotation from 2011 about the radio readers.

112 Mr. Schultz asked about grants or loans (for readers or other projects). There are no
113 grants, only low interest loans. Mr. Duquette thought that funds were available to move
114 on the project (\$15K to purchase, \$15K to install) but in reality all there may be is \$5K.

115 Mr. Tuttle said the distribution system should be addressed first with any available
116 money. There is an area on Dale Street (near Pead Hill to the Fisk home) where
117 asbestos pipes are being replaced with cast iron a section at a time. (Costs to do all at
118 once is about \$40K-\$50K as Carl Somero and Mr. Tuttle figured.) (Asbestos is also in
119 the Acres and school road.)

120 Mr. Schultz said that his highest priority is where water quality impacts health.

121 Some of the expense (for future projects – pipe upgrades) can come from hook-up fees
122 at Mark Prolman's site – 50 units.

123 Mr. Tuttle thought that \$100K is available for Main Street. Mr. Duquette disagreed – the
124 \$100K is to come from rate increases. Discussion ensued about whether money is or

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125 is not in this year's budget, and what is the 'emergency fund'. A public hearing must be
126 held to allow rate increase. Mr. Tuttle believes there is about \$130K in savings account.
127 Expressed concerns about condition of pipes in ground – inadequate for intended use.
128 (Mr. Duquette) Lower Main street project is part of the grant request, not money that's in
129 savings account. Mr. Schultz asked which grant we're talking about – a grant with state
130 for Milford and Wilton (Pine Valleys apartments). The state has no money so there has
131 been no action.

132 Mr. Schultz brought discussion back to the readers. While he sees advantages to the
133 readers, he realizes that there are other projects that take priority. He believes that they
134 can put together a proposal for immediate needs (Rebecca's Way and the pit) and then
135 find way to pay (from savings or other means). Before anything can be done, the rate
136 increase needs to be approved.

137 Mr. Duquette reiterated process for Dale Street – when there was a break, he, Mr.
138 McGettigan and Mr. Tuttle would replace sections at a time. Mr. Schultz expressed
139 concern about water quality and public health fears. Mr. Tuttle explained that while
140 asbestos is present, it's not 'touching' the water supply coming into anyone's home.
141 Cost to replace is upwards of \$100K. As to how upgrades anywhere and moneys being
142 available from hook-up fees, Mr. Tuttle said that the next time they meet with Mr.
143 Prolman, he needs to show there is enough water for 50 units AND fire safety.

144 Mr. Tuttle asked about a computer model of the water system. Mr. Bergeron said that
145 Underwood Engineers can make a hydraulic model of the water system. It would show
146 where pipes are, their sizes, connections, flow, etc.

147 Mr. Schultz asked if changing sizes (of pipes anywhere) would impact the system?

148 Yes, the model would show this. He suggested getting quotes for the model
149 (engineering study). It was pointed out that Dawn Tuomala (Monadnock Survey) has a
150 GIS mapper and offered help in create a satellite map. She's is doing this gratis as their
151 company is learning to use the equipment, etc. Other quotations for mapping will be
152 sought as well as exploring any grants that might be available to do this.

153 **Hydrant Flushing** ... this is usually done once a year. Mr. Bergeron can start after
154 meters are all read. Prefers to do in early evening and at night so as not to interrupt
155 traffic, work days. He described using a directional flush system. There are 100

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hydrants. He needs an assistant and felt that 2 weeks is enough time (40 hours a week). Commissioners all agreed that assistant be hired and paid (under contracted services) a flat rate of \$15 per hour (no overtime differential). A notice will be put in the Telegraph and Ledger? With date(s) of hydrant flushing.

There was a question raised about a substitute (backup) for Mr. Bergeron in case of his illness. A certified operator from Milford is available. Commissioners will work on an agreement for this that can be discussed at next meeting.

Mr. Bergeron asked if he could change out bad meters with the new style, especially to help with readings at Rebecca's Way and the pit. Mike (Bergeron) will inventory old meters on hand. Old meters are only worth \$4-\$5 in scrap metal. Mr. Duquette will check with Don Ladd about lot size and price differential and, if reasonable, Mr. Bergeron may go ahead.

Other Business – Pump panel VFD is on order and due any day. (Currently running on Everett Well only). It should come in early next week. (July 2)

All commissioners signed letter authorizing CD transfer; because of delay, a few dollars in interest was lost.

Mr. Schultz noted that Mr. Duquette is quoted in (Jessie Salisbury) newspaper article about dam deficiencies. Selectmen told Mr. Duquette that there is no money in budget for a \$15K bill. Mr. Tuttle pointed out that water department's share (as previously agreed with Selectman Donovan representing that board) is \$7000 for the engineering study to be done and it's included in Contract Services for this year's budget. All that needs to be done now is to get the study done and then next year the other half (Selectmen's portion actual repairs) will be done later when town has voted. Tuttle said everything that has been done at dam so far has been paid by Water department; eventually department may be reimbursed. What HTE has sent is a proposal; Water department is only responsible now for Items 1 and 2 (engineering study) and Mr. Tuttle insists that money is available in 2012 budget. Clarification of what (new) proposal from H T E may be needed so Water Department can move forward. Engineer must be hired by November. It's been suggested that Misters Tuttle and Duquette meet with Dan Donovan again to clarify everything. (There is no Dam Maintenance line item in budget; amounts for the dam are included in Contract Services.)

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187 Mr. Schultz suggested getting multiple quotes for mowing and get quotes in writing,
188 including quotes from the town, so there is no question of what was said / discussed.
189 He suggests that commission use formal rfp or rfq.

190 This will be discussed at July meeting on July 26th.

191 **Clerk's Appointment** - Sewer Commissioner John Jowders joined the Water
192 Commissions to discuss. The motion by Mr. Tuttle, seconded by Mr. Jowders to hire
193 Ms. Eckstrom as Clerk for the Water and Sewer Commissions. Ms. Eckstrom will be
194 paid as an Employee at a rate of \$20 per hour for her time at each meeting and up to 2
195 hours time to transcribe each meeting hour. (Transcription time allowance may be
196 adjusted if necessary after Board can see effect of having the Clerk present at meeting
197 and back up recording rather than transcribing straight from the voice recorder.
198 Eckstrom will receive a W-2 at end of year. Motion was approved 3:1 – Voting Yes
199 were Mistrs Tuttle, Jowders and Schultz. Voting No – Mr. Duquette.
200 There being no other business, the Water Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:25.
201 Next regular meeting is July 26, 2012.

202
203 Respectfully submitted,
204 Joanna K. Eckstrom, Clerk